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**“ MOSSES WITH HAND-LENS AND MICROSCOPE.”
A REVIEW.**

GEORGE N. BEST.

A noticeable feature of this valuable work is its wealth of illustrations. It contains no fewer than 88 full-page plates and 265 figures. The larger part of these plates have been taken from either Sullivant's *Icones Muscorum* or the *Bryologia Europea*, and are in every respect equal to the originals, which is equivalent to saying that none better have as yet been produced. While not so highly artistic, the figures, scattered through the 416 pages of text where most needed, answer quite well the purpose for which they were intended, and considerably enhance the value of the work. The mechanical execution of this book is all that could be desired—heavy paper, wide margin, clear type, and neat and substantial binding.

In the preparation of *Mosses with Hand-Lens and Microscope*, covering a period of about eight years,¹ the author has exercised a commendable eclecticism in gleaning from various sources, more especially from the current literature of the subject, such material as seemed best suited to his purpose, and by this means has been enabled to keep his own work well up with the latest advances in bryology. In matters pertaining to nomenclature extremes have been avoided, and a conservative but by no means antiquated course has been pursued. The claim that this work is “non-technical” would scarcely be allowed without qualification. No doubt the author intended it to be as free from technicalities as it could possibly be made without compromising it in other respects. But every science, and trade as well, must of necessity have a language of its own, a language which the novice must acquire if he expects to master the science or the trade.

While it is freely conceded that Dr. Grout's book contains a great deal that is of inestimable value to the professional bryologist, its strongest appeal is to the student and the amateur. In fact, it is with feelings akin to envy, possibly mixed with regret, that we recall our own hard struggles and bitter disappointments as we tried to force our way, some fifteen years ago, through the labyrinthian maze of genera and species of the Musci with the aid of Lesquereux and James' Manual and Barnes' Keys. In comparison our state of mind would have been Utopian if we had had at our command a work like this, containing chapters on such practical subjects as “The Collection and Preservation of Mosses,” “How to Mount Mosses,” “Methods of Manipulation,” “Life History and Structure of the Moss Plant,” “Illustrated Glossary of Bryological Terms,”—so easy and so plain as to make mistakes almost impossible, and a manual each step of which is safeguarded by a description that describes, an illustration that illustrates, or a friendly caution that prevents our making the same blunder as perchance the author himself once did, much to his discomfort.

On the whole, in Dr. Grout's book we find but little to censure, a great deal to commend. In the manual part a larger number of species might have

1. Part I. appeared June, 1903. and Part V.. completing the work, July, 1910.

been described, but we question whether it would have been the better for it, possibly not so good. This work is to be regarded rather as an adjunct to a systematic treatise than of a complete or systematic treatise in itself. The author is a teacher, and as such appeals to methods. In Mosses with Hand-Lens and Microscope, *how* to study mosses to the best advantage is the object to be attained; and properly so, for usually after we learn "how," the results promptly follow. Considerable pains has been taken to blaze the way for an understanding of such difficult genera as *Orthotrichum*, *Bryum* and *Amblystegium*. The treatment of these must be considered a model of perspicuity. We welcome this work as being by far the best contribution yet made to American bryology.

G. N. BEST

REVIEWS OF CURRENT LITERATURE.

The Mosses collected by the last French *Antarctic Expedition*, under the direction of Dr. Jean M. Charcot, extending from 1903 to 1905, have been elaborated by M. Jules Cardot, and are published under the auspices of the Minister of Public Instruction of France. In point of number of species this collection is not very important, only 18 species being reported by M. Cardot. One new species, *Brachythecium Turqueti* is illustrated. But, while the number of species is small, the light thrown by these collections made under such trying climatic conditions, upon the struggle of organisms through the antarctic cold is interesting. M. Cardot, through whose hands have passed all the bryological antarctic collections of recent years, in this report sums up the present status of our knowledge, showing that only 51 species of mosses are known from the Antarctic Regions, 24, or nearly half of which, are endemic. But of these, M. Cardot shows, several species are in truth polar representatives of species belonging outside the antarctic zone. And here he mentions *Dicranum Nordenskioldii* Card., as modified from *D. aciphyllum* Hook. f. et Wils.; *Polytrichum antarcticum* Card., from *P. piliferum* Schreb., and *Brachythecium antarcticum* Card., certain forms of which he points out approach closely to *B. georgico-glareosum* (C.M.) Paris. And possibly also *Bryum amblyolepis* Card. belongs here, since it may be considered a race, or subspecies of *B. argenteum* L. Yet all these plants, the author points out, show characters sufficiently important to entitle them to rank as distinct species.

JOHN M. HOLZINGER.

P. S. The public press of Feb. 12, 1910, reports from Valparaiso, Chili, of the French Antarctic Expedition as again in the field under Charcot, that it has "reached lat. 70° S., long. 126° W., and discovered 120 miles of new land to the west and south of Alexander Island."

Mr. Cardot has also completed his report on the Mosses collected on the National Antarctic Expedition in the steamer *Discovery*. At the five stations established by the *Discovery*, seven species of mosses were collected, two of which are new: *Didymodon gelidus* Card., and *Bryum atgens* Card. These are described and figured in two plates. In the Bulletin de l'Herbier Boissier, of 1908, No. 2, M. Cardot describes a new dicranaceous genus,